

I am Rebecca Harrison from Southbury. I am 16 years old. I have been involved with 4-H for 9 years and FFA for 3 years. I am an honor role student attending the vo-ag program at Nonnewaug High School. I am currently the vice-president of my 4-H club and involved in teen leadership programs for the state of Connecticut. Seven million children nationwide are involved with 4-H. Fifty-five percent of these children ages 7 to 19 are from major metropolitan areas, suburbs, and inner cities. These kids have after-school activities to attend to; homework that needs to get done, or animals that need to be feed and taken care of. These 4-Hers care about their grades and how their animals are looked after. I began in 4-H at 7 years of age learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. USDA support in the Farm Bill will enable 4-H to continue to provide positive youth development during out-of-school time and empower youth to become effective leaders and contributing members of society.

4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults, through organized clubs, camps and after-school programs. The essential elements of 4-H are belonging, independence, mastery and generosity. These elements are achieved through initiatives that focus on healthy lifestyles, science, engineering and technology, and civic duty. In all programs, 4-H regards youth as capable individuals who contribute in meaningful, authentic ways to the organizations and communities where they live, learn, work and play.

The need for science, engineering and technology education is essential for tomorrow's leaders. I have attended conferences and workshops that have provided

access to the latest technological advances in agriculture, life sciences, family and consumer resource management, human development and nutrition because of 4-H and its connection to Uconn. 4-H is such a part of Uconn that they have a flavor of ice cream called empowermint. Mint ice cream empowered to 4-H.

The farm policy should support the agricultural end of the life that I live. I hope to take over my family farm and get involved in an agricultural career. I attend Nonnewaug High School. This may sound like an ordinary school to you but to me it sounds like so much more. This is not only a regional high school but it is the home of the Ellis Clark Agri-Science Program. This program doesn't just offer a tractor-driving course, it offers, animal husbandry, veterinary science, horse management, conservation, floriculture, landscaping, agricultural mechanics, and agricultural production. Each course covers a different area of agriculture. Every course has something that interests someone. I think that each course is very interesting and has something to do with what I want to do in the future.

Just like any other person in the country I want to feel like I have lead people that I know into a better lifestyle. Anyone that wants to eventually lead needs discipline. Science, engineering and technology is a huge part of being a leader. I want to help animals get better medications to get well faster. Without my agricultural background I would not be able to get into a college so that I could start my career goals. To be able to participate in the career that I want to get into I need to be able to be proficient in science. This is not just biology and chemistry; this is agricultural science as well. I need to know the latest advances in technological science and know how to use the equipment

provided. I also need to know certain types of engineering so that I can use the information it provides me to use in my career. Here are three things that you will use in agriculture that you can learn in high school and college. This proves that agriculture is a very needed career in life.

4-H has provided positive youth-adult relationships. I am still in contact with those teen age role models from when I started 4-H. They have now finished college and are starting their careers. Yet, they continue to provide mentoring to myself and other 4-Hers. 4-H has provided me with competence, confidence, connection, character and caring. I have learned through positive relationships with adults, peers and older peer role models. I have learned life skills and leadership. I love school, I love 4-H, I love FFA, but most all I love working with my cattle everyday and developing new skills and perfecting old ones. I don't know what I would do without my cattle or if I didn't have something to do after school. I hope that what I said to you today will help you realize what the youth of America needs. Please continue to provide funds for 4-H programs and support the positive influence on today's youth.

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